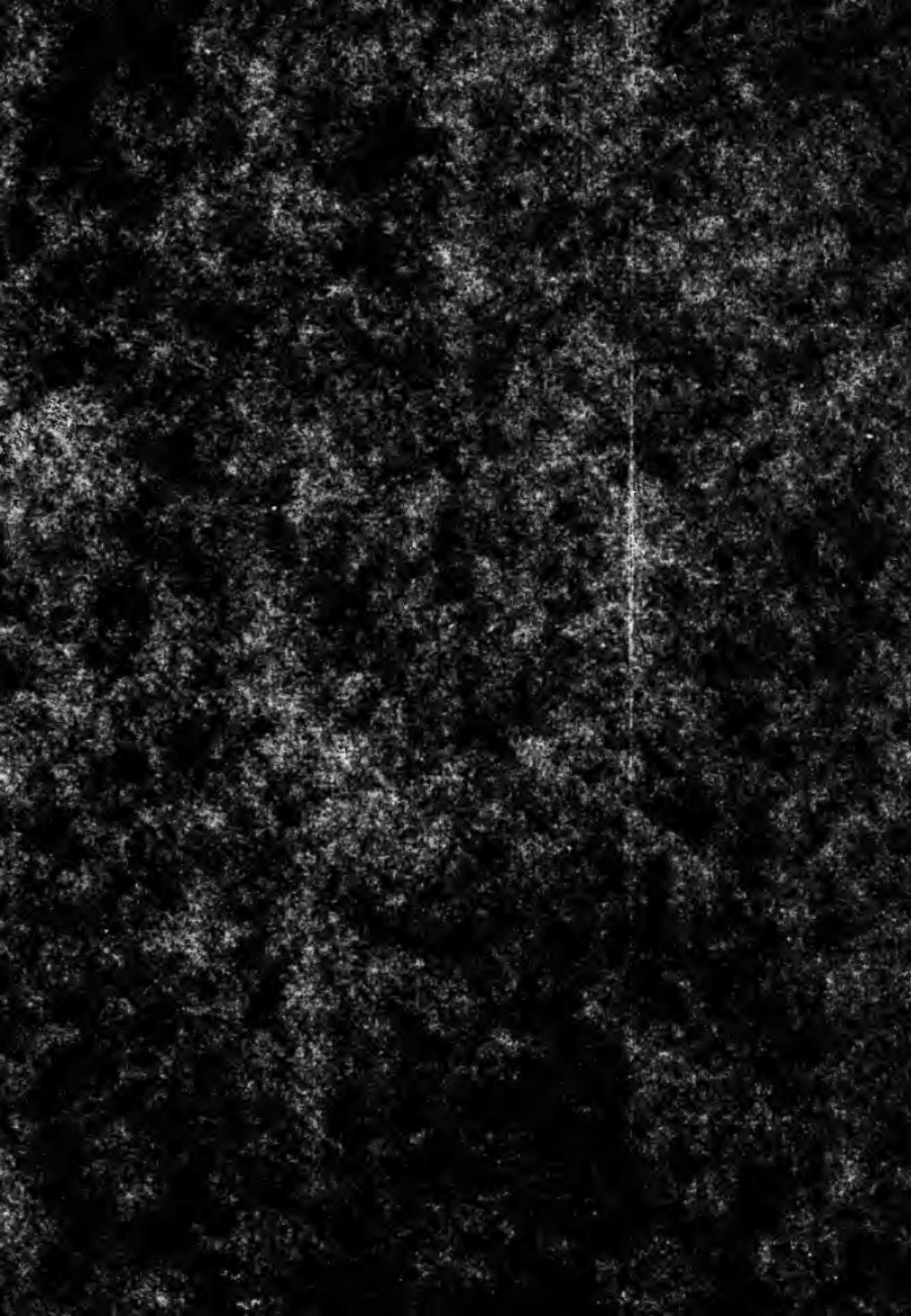


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# America and Britain

THE STORY OF THE RELATIONS  
BETWEEN TWO PEOPLES

BY

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“THE THINGS MEN FIGHT FOR”  
“AMERICA AMONG THE NATIONS”

ETC.



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## INTRODUCTION

THIS is not an argument but a story, the story of our relation with that people with whom we have had more to do, — and must seemingly continue to have more to do, — than with any other in the world. If the story seems to argue as it goes on, it is because, like other stories, it has its moral, a moral which it is not purposed either to emphasize or to avoid. Such bias as it may have is the unconscious bias of an American of American lineage, but an American who has seen much of Britain's work in the world, as well as that of other nations who work on somewhat different lines. Whatever the result of these experiences, the aim has been to tell the story just as it happened, omitting details only because they seem unimportant, never because they make for this or that conclusion. If the conclusion reached is at variance with tradition, it is because a juster balance is held between those showy and dramatic happenings upon which the popular imagination loves to dwell, and the quiet, unobtrusive factors which so often quite outweigh them in importance. An effort has also been made to view these international situations somewhat from both ends. We are prone to remember our end of a transaction and forget the other, even though the one may be quite unintelligible without the other. It is hoped that in certain cases the key to an understanding has thus been supplied.

The story of Anglo-American relations is not an idyll or a tale of mutual chivalry and devotion. It is the

## INTRODUCTION

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record of two very human peoples, both keen in the pursuit of self-interest and much more conscious of immediate than of ultimate ends. But it is the story of peoples that on the whole have gotten on together, that have differed and even quarreled without permanent estrangement, and that have known how to temper the sordidness of self-interest with something of magnanimity and broader vision. Often dwelling in thought upon surface differences, they have never escaped the subconscious realization that they were one people, having infinitely more in common than in contrast, and approaching by slightly different paths an identical goal. Mutual helpfulness has not been their constant care, but it has been their unfailing attitude in all great crises of their experience. Not a single crisis of our history could have been safely passed without the sympathy if not the positive help of Britain. We may safely add that henceforth not a single crisis in the history of either can be safely passed without mutual aid and help.

But these general considerations of policy will not of themselves insure the necessary mutuality. The life of all peoples is much more instinctive than calculating, and if Anglo-Saxon mutuality is to be an effective fact in the critical days before us, it will be because the habit has been slowly forming in the past. What has been the underlying instinct in Anglo-American relations in the past? It is to answer this question, — not to beg the question, — that these pages are written.

# AMERICA AND BRITAIN

## I

### THE BRITISH ORIGIN OF AMERICA

It is to be noted first of all that our nation is of British origin. We are a development from the British colonies planted in North America during the seventeenth century. It is true that other colonies, Spanish, French, Dutch, and Swedish, were planted in America about the same time, and that these have made their contribution to the American commonwealth. This fact, taken in connection with the exceedingly varied immigration of later times from all countries of Europe and even from Asia and Africa, is often cited in refutation of this theory of British origin. But this argument is really beside the mark. It only proves that our *people* are of composite origin. But that is true of every people. The ancient Greeks were of very mixed origin, but they were none the less Greek. The British people are sprung from ancient Britons, Angles, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, to say nothing of the numberless immigrants of every sort and the mingling of Welsh, Scotch, and Irish blood which has gone on for centuries. Yet they are very British. So the American people has been recruited

from almost every race under the sun, but it has been assimilated or is being assimilated to a type as uniform as that of any other people.

But the fact that our people are of mixed origin does not mean that our *nation* is a conglomerate or that our Civilization culture is a compromise between different **not complex** contributing elements. Our language, for instance, is not a medley of English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Syrian, and the like. It is English, the other languages being represented at most by a few scattering words which rapidly become anglicized beyond recognition. And the same is true of all that is essential in our political and social institutions. The influence of the French, Spanish, and Dutch can be traced in our laws and customs, but only locally and in matters of detail, much as in our speech. Even where their language and institutions have a certain independent existence, as in Louisiana and New Mexico, they are clearly losing ground. Those who speak French or Spanish speak English also, or are learning to do so. Only the British speech and British institutions have been able to persist, to enlarge their territory, and to absorb or suppress competing systems. It is therefore perfectly correct to say that our country and our civilization are of British origin, the non-British elements of our population having failed to maintain their earlier type and allowed themselves to be assimilated to a type essentially British.

This important truth is somewhat obscured by the

fact that immigration is still actively going on, and large numbers of newcomers are always with us. Some of these remain very foreign, and <sup>Immigration still active</sup> where many of a kind are congregated there may sometimes be found real foreign communities, with foreign speech, foreign schools and churches, and foreign customs and ideals. But if we study these communities, we shall find that they are merely receiving stations through which arriving foreigners are constantly passing out into the great American beyond. Individual Germans or Scandinavians may stay in such communities all their lives and hardly become American at all, but their descendants cannot do so, and unless their places are taken by new arrivals, the community soon loses its foreign character and undergoes the inevitable transformation into a type which though not present-day English, is plainly derived from the English of colonial days.

The British colonists who thus set the pace which all others were to follow, were not average Englishmen. They were for the most part malcontents who protested against established beliefs and practices. They were perhaps no more reasonable than other people, but they were certainly more independent and energetic, qualities of value if turned to wise account. Meanwhile societies of established ways and settled traditions found them very troublesome. They were a problem in all the European countries, but different countries dealt with the problem in very different ways. England early

<sup>Exceptional character of colonists</sup>

adopted the policy of allowing these troublesome elements to migrate to the New World and found communities according to their own ideas. She gave them no help and attempted no interference. She thought herself fortunate to be rid of them on these terms, and they thought themselves lucky to get off thus easily. Probably both were right.

France adopted a very different policy. She would have no dissenters in the New France that she was

**French colonization** creating. So she persecuted her dissenters and expelled them from all her dominions.

**policy** Meanwhile she sought for regular and normal persons to people her colonies. But people who are regular and in harmony with the ideas and practices of those about them do not care to go to distant lands and alien environments. They prefer to stay where they are. So France found few colonists, though she offered them moneyed assistance and large inducements. The English colonies consequently grew much faster than the French, and when, following the lead of the home countries, they became involved in hostilities with each other, the more energetic and more populous English colonies inevitably prevailed. It is a curious fact that Canada, Britain's chief possession in America to-day, is the outgrowth of one of these French colonies, the colonies of her own founding having slipped the leash of her control.

One more fact must be noted if we are to understand this earlier situation. The colonies were far away from England and communication was infrequent

and slow. This tended strongly to confirm the let-alone policy which England had adopted with reference to these troublesome dissenters. Most <sup>Political</sup> matters that came up for discussion were too <sup>effect of</sup> unimportant or too urgent to be referred <sup>isolation</sup> to England for settlement. And since these matters chiefly concerned the colonists, who were not savages but Englishmen, and quite as competent as the Englishmen at home, there was every reason for leaving to them matters which they understood so much better than any one in England. The colonists of course regarded themselves as British subjects and were so regarded at home, but they were stiff-necked and opinionated, and a prudent statesman would avoid unnecessary interference with them. And since their geographical separation from the mother country made pretty much all interference unnecessary, the policy of letting them manage their own affairs became a habit, and the habit in turn came to be a right which only a very bold or a very foolish man would question. Among the governors sent out to the colonies by the British king there were occasionally such men, but they came to grief, and their failure only confirmed the habitual independence of the colonies. This independence was not due to any of those later theories about the universal right to liberty. It was due to the fact that England allowed certain of the most unmanageable of her people to move quite beyond the reach of her effective control.

Meanwhile in the century and a half of this colonial

period England herself underwent very great changes. The dissenters did not all go to the colonies. Many of them remained to make trouble for the established order. They won adherents and became bold in asserting their will. A king and an archbishop who resisted them lost their heads and another king his throne. English rulers became circumspect, and habitual deference to the will of the people developed those free institutions and popular liberties which are the glory of England. Unconsciously the English people were coming over to the position of the colonies, winning by a bitter struggle the privileges which the colonists enjoyed by virtue of their peculiar situation. Neither side realized for a time where the other side stood, and so they were less prompt to understand and help each other than could have been wished. But there were not wanting those who saw clearly that both stood for the same things and proclaimed this fact in dark hours of confusion and distrust. It is but fair to say that these men of broader vision were more numerous in England than in the colonies. There was something very engrossing about life in these primitive settlements which did not tend to broad sympathies. England touched the world so closely and at so many points that she had even then something of that world consciousness which has been the fruit of her wide experience. But we lived much unto ourselves and touched the great world very little. What wonder that we hardly realized the change that England had undergone.

## II

### THE RUPTURE WITH ENGLAND

Both England and the colonies were rudely jostled out of their comfortable habits by the attempt of a foolish king to assert a vanished authority. For a long time the kings, while maintaining the fiction of royal authority, had been in the habit of respecting the wishes of the people as expressed through Parliament, and here, as in the colonies, habit had come to be regarded as a right. But when George III came to the throne, his ambitious mother is said to have given him as her parting advice: "Be a king, George. Be a king," which of course meant that he should exercise real authority and not allow continued deference to destroy his right to rule. This advice he proceeded to follow, being intent, apparently, rather upon restoring his authority than upon accomplishing anything definite by its exercise. But mindful of the fate of his predecessors, he did not venture openly to resist Parliament, but tried the more insidious method of corrupting it. In the colonies he adopted the direct method of asserting his authority through his ministers. In both cases he was entirely within his theoretical legal rights, but in both cases he was overriding long-standing privileges, which was of course precisely what he had set out to do. In both cases he encountered bitter opposition, though a minority stood by him. In

both cases he ultimately failed, and the rights which before had been nothing but habitual concessions were established by firm guarantees.

But unfortunately the two cases were not outwardly alike and the two natural allies did not at once see their common interest. The British people <sup>Attitude of</sup> English and <sup>colonists</sup> deeply resented the corruption of Parliament and the perversion of the means by which they were accustomed to express their will. The colonists, on the other hand, hardly knew of this and did not base their protest upon that ground. They objected to the exercise of any home authority over them, whether legitimate or otherwise. This seemed to the people at home to be very extreme ground. They respected the authority of Parliament when it was not corrupted, and it seemed to them that every Englishman should do so, no matter where he lived. They did not realize that Englishmen living thousands of miles away, and with little access or communication, could not express their will through Parliament as the home people could do. The trouble was that in theory England had always governed her colonies, and in practice they had always governed themselves. Englishmen were conscious of the theory, and the colonists were conscious of the practice. So when the colonists declared that they were independent, that they always had been so, and that no other arrangement was practicable or right, most Englishmen thought this a very monstrous doctrine. If the king had not been alienating the home people at the same

time, he would doubtless have had their very strong support for the contention that every Englishman, no matter where he lived, should recognize the authority of Parliament, for they had not yet learned that there are practical limitations to the exercise of such authority. As it was, he got very little support, for they were fighting their own battle for the right to manage their own affairs, just as the colonists were doing. It is a pity they did not see that the colonists were fighting for the same thing and that their very different way of putting their case was only due to differences of situation. It is a pity, too, that the colonists did not perceive how the English people were recognizing their principle in the very different application which suited their circumstances. A pity, it is true, but not surprising on either side. Great principles detach themselves but slowly from entangling circumstance, and Anglo-Saxons were feeling their way as yet toward those principles which have since become the corner stone of their civilization.

So with much of misunderstanding the English people and the colonists fought in unconscious alliance and succeeded where either alone would have failed. It was settled once for all <sup>Alliance of English and colonists</sup> that the king must not resist Parliament or try to influence its decisions in any way. So sensitive have the English people become on this point that when, half a century later, a member of the royal family went to the House of Commons to listen to a debate, it evoked a storm of protest as a disguised

attempt to influence Parliamentary opinion. The innocent attempt has never been repeated. The royal family are the only Englishmen who have no right to influence political opinion in England.

And it was settled equally and for all time that the colonies were independent and had the right to manage their own affairs. It was the thirteen rebellious colonies that first won this acknowledgment, which they emphasized by brushing aside all the forms of British rule which the king's ill-judged attempt had made odious, but they were no more independent than they always had been. That was the ground which they took from the first and very wisely. They had always managed their own affairs and had proved themselves quite competent to do so. Moreover, as they were situated, there was no other practicable way in which these affairs could be managed. This had always been recognized tacitly until the king challenged it, and henceforth it was recognized consciously, both by the king and by the people. The English people are a practical people, and when it was really brought to their mind, they could see that Parliament could not wisely manage the affairs of Americans whom they never saw and of whose situation they knew next to nothing.

And so there followed from our rebellion another result that Americans are quite too prone to forget. England not only recognized the independence of the thirteen colonies that rebelled, but of all her other

## THE RUPTURE WITH ENGLAND

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colonies where Englishmen held control. One after another she has recognized the independence of Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and even of South Africa, though its Dutch population had been so recently at war with the British Empire. These great colonies have not discarded the British flag and the outward forms of British rule as we did, simply because no foolish monarch alienated them as he did us, but they are just as independent as we are. Canada retains the British flag, but she has been openly told that she may discard it, — may adopt the stars and stripes or a flag of her own, — any time she chooses. She has a governor sent from England, but he does not govern and his signature to bills passed by the Canadian Parliament is perfunctory and compulsory. Canada makes her own laws, enacts her own tariffs, — against England as well as against other nations, — makes treaties with other nations independent of England, even decides upon war or peace independently of the mother country. What more can we do? Our case was merely the test case, that is all. Once settled, it was settled for Canada, for Australia, for all the rest. Slowly even India and Egypt, with their more backward peoples, are achieving the same independence. It is the British principle, a principle first established in connection with us, the first British Colony that came of age. It is not strange that this first case caused some misunderstanding and some mutual irritation. It is not strange that the British people had to learn

All colonies  
win inde-  
pendence

the great lesson once. The strange thing is that they had to learn it only once. Most lessons require repetition.

This great achievement is in the main a matter for profound congratulation. It taught the world how nations could hold together, — like England, Canada, and Australia, — and yet remain free, giving us thus the key to the great problem of the future. But it had its unfortunate incidents as well. Those of the colonists who did not approve the policy of complete separation, but would rather have achieved independence with union as Canada has done, — a plan that then seemed impracticable, — found no sympathy with the majority and were obliged to flee the country to avoid a worse fate. Many of them went to Canada, where they nursed and propagated their resentment in a way which is much to be regretted. Their loyalty to England made them enemies of the colonial cause and aroused the antipathies which civil war more than any other is sure to engender. These antipathies in their turn made it impossible for them later to return and effectually prevented any later exercise of magnanimity, — perhaps even of justice, — by the victorious colonists towards them. It is in part due to this fact that a war which closed with essential agreement did not close with sympathy.

The Loyalists and their grievances

More serious still in its resulting sentiments was the failure already noted of Americans to distinguish between the king and his group of reactionaries on

## THE RUPTURE WITH ENGLAND

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the one hand, and the English people on the other. In the dim distance all seemed to the Americans to be alike, hostile to their cause. Indeed they at first thought themselves to be so. Thus all alike became objects of our aversion. Yet the English people and the people's government were at the bottom in sympathy with the principle for which we were fighting.

King not  
distin-  
guished  
from people

### III

## INDEPENDENCE AND THE PEACE CRISIS, 1783

THE American War of Independence is a curious illustration of the divided purpose of England at this time. The king and his party of course urged the war strongly, being determined to compel the colonists to recognize their authority. It certainly looked as if they could do so, for England completely controlled the seas, she had a great army of trained soldiers and ample wealth and military supplies. The colonists were few and poor. Moreover they lacked arms and ammunition, these things having previously been imported from Europe, which was now obviously impossible. Yet the colonists won the war for two reasons. First, because the English people did not support the king and his party. Second, because France aided them, bringing them ships, men, and supplies. Indeed the American war was only a little episode in a very great war which was fought in Europe, in India, and everywhere where these two great powers found themselves in contact. Moreover in this great war England won at every point except in America. England's efforts were plainly rather half-hearted in this part of the struggle. There was in fact a party in England all this time which maintained that the colonies ought to be independent, and this was the

## INDEPENDENCE AND THE PEACE CRISIS

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real English party as opposed to the little party of the king which was kept in power by bribery of Parliament.

When at last the British failed at Yorktown, the king's party fell from power and the party of the English people came into control, a control which they have never since lost. This party at once showed itself ready to make peace and to recognize the colonies as independent states. Had the English public been agreed, as in the conflict with Napoleon or in the present war with Germany, that the war must be fought through to victory, no matter at what cost, there can be no doubt that England could have done so. But this party — the party of the English people — did not believe this, and hence they offered peace, not grudgingly but willingly and on extremely favorable terms.

People's  
party will-  
ingly make  
peace

But the attitude of England was most clearly manifested in another connection. It must be remembered that we were allies of France and had made the usual agreement to make peace only in common with our ally. Spain, too, though not formally our ally, was at war with England at the time. It soon developed that our relations with these nations involved grave problems. It is an amazing fact that England, even at this moment of rebellion against her authority, took our side and saved us from the gravest dangers.

Difficul-  
ties with  
France and  
Spain

France had designs of her own which we did not suspect until the time came to make peace. The

**France schemes against independence** Americans demanded that England should negotiate with them directly as an independent power, for they had maintained from the first that they had always been independent. The French minister thought this very unreasonable. He said that when the treaty was concluded, it would make them independent and that they should be satisfied with that. This may seem to be a very little point, but it actually made a very great difference. If the Americans were not independent until the treaty was concluded, then they could not treat directly with Britain at all, for only independent nations can make treaties together. France would thus have been the leader in conducting the negotiations and would be in a position largely to determine the terms of the treaty. This was what the French minister wanted. It soon developed that he did not intend the colonies to be really independent even after the treaty. It was even suggested that we should not ask England to recognize our independence but should ask France to guarantee our independence. It is evident that if our independence rested only upon the guarantee of France, we might be independent of all other nations but we would be *dependent upon France*. This was precisely what France desired. She had aimed to control North America and in her long wars with England she had lost everything. Now she hoped, with the aid of the

colonists, to regain, in a different way, the ground she had lost. So she held off about negotiating until the Americans should recognize their helplessness and put themselves in her hands. There was nothing peculiarly reprehensible in this attitude of France as such matters were then judged. She had no reason to favor these colonists who were not of her race and who had done as much as England herself had done to defeat French purposes in the New World. If she could, by diplomatic manipulation, recover a place of which she believed herself to have been unjustly deprived, she saw no reason why she should not do so. It must be remembered, too, that this was not the free France of to-day, but the France of the *ancien régime*, whose government, not in the least representative of the people, was soon to go down in ruin.

As the Americans gradually perceived this purpose of France they became greatly alarmed. They were wholly at the mercy of France unless they could find a powerful ally against her. It was England that came to their rescue. England  
helps us to  
outwit  
France She consented at once to treat with them as an independent nation. The negotiation was most difficult, for it had to be conducted clandestinely, eluding the vigilance of French spies, but it was accomplished, and a treaty was drawn up covering all points at issue between them. England conceded not only our claim of independence but much else in the way of valuable privilege. The terms were such as to amaze the governments of France and Spain,

who were dumbfounded to see England acting practically as the ally of America and scheming for her advantage. .

The treaty thus drawn up and prepared for signature was laid before the French minister (for it must be remembered that we had promised to make peace only in conjunction with France), and he was asked to sign it with us. Thus we kept the letter of our agreement, but we plainly evaded its spirit, for what France wanted was that we should *negotiate* the treaty together, not merely sign it together. The justification for this evasion must be sought in the fact that France had proven herself plainly disloyal to the spirit of the agreement. The French minister was exceedingly angry, but he finally realized that he had been caught napping and that there was no further chance for the manipulations upon which he had counted. He therefore signed the treaty, but yielded with bad grace.

Our relation to Spain was much less vital, but it was hardly less significant. Spain had settled Florida, but had recently surrendered it to Britain in exchange for Havana. It of course did not take the part of the colonies in the war and was not included in the treaty of independence. It was anticipated, however, that when Britain made peace with Spain the whole problem of their vast colonial possessions would be taken up and that exchanges would probably be made. Now that Britain had lost the colonies, Florida with its Spanish population had lost much of its former value and would

very likely be given to Spain in exchange for something more valuable to England.

There was a tract of land known as the Yazoo Lands constituting the northern part of the present states of Mississippi and Alabama, which did not belong originally either to Florida (which then extended west to the Mississippi) or to any of the British colonies. When England acquired Florida, this no-man's-land, which required some attention, was brought under the administrative control of Florida. As none of the thirteen colonies claimed it, it would seem natural that it should stay there, and such was England's determination if she retained Florida. But if Florida were to be returned to Spain, she was not minded to make it any larger than was necessary. Hence a secret agreement was included in the treaty (it was not shown to the French minister) that if Florida remained British, its northern boundary should be latitude  $32^{\circ} 30'$ ; but if Florida became Spanish, its northern boundary should be  $31^{\circ}$ . We need not here discuss the legitimacy of such a secret agreement nor the disputes to which it afterward gave rise. It concerns us merely to note the attitude of England toward this new American nation which she had just rescued from France and set upon its feet. She said in effect by this agreement: "If Florida is to be ours, we want this unappropriated strip, but if Florida is to be Spanish, we want you to have it, even though you have never had any claim to it."

The Yazoo  
Lands;  
the secret  
clause

Thus the English people, having overthrown the government which challenged their liberties and ours, **The English** not only recognized our independence, but **people early** saved us in the first great crisis of our **national life** and even conspired to extend our territory at the expense of unfriendly neighbors.

## IV

### AMERICA AND THE NAPOLEONIC CRISIS, 1812-1815

THE first years of our national life were years of unprecedented commotion in Europe. France, in the throes of revolution and later in war with all Europe, counted somewhat overconfidently on our aid if not our open alliance. It was plain that she had not by any means learned the lesson of the peace treaty. The great wisdom of Washington saved us from incurring the obligations and the enmities which at that stage of development might have been fatal. The tradition of French friendship, however, which had followed the war was pretty effectually shattered. The change is perhaps best indicated by the attitude of Jefferson, who began his political career as an ardent friend of France and bitter enemy of England, but closed it, after eight years in the president's office, as a strong advocate of friendship with England.

But with the rise of Napoleon the European situation became desperate and drove the contestants to unheard-of expedients. Napoleon had brought all the continent under his rule and only England stood at bay. At Boulogne, where the emperor had gathered his huge army for the invasion of England, he looked across, as Cæsar had done, to the white cliffs of Dover and waited impatiently for news that his fleet had overcome the

England is  
hard  
pressed by  
Napoleon

watchful British navy that kept him from his prey. That news never came. Down close by Gibraltar the British fleet met the great fleet of Napoleon and broke its power forever. There is something inspiring in that simple message that Nelson flew from his mast-head that night at Trafalgar, a message so different from the bombastic speeches of the emperor: "England expects every man to do his duty." The duty was done and England was saved. And not England only. It is easier now than it was then to see what was at stake in the titanic contest. Had England been conquered Napoleon would have been the undisputed master of Europe. And the mastery of Europe in that day, perhaps in any day, cannot but mean the mastery of America and of the world. Does any one doubt as to what would be the fate of America to-day if a single power should get control of Europe? Of all this we were then unconscious. Napoleon's career might interest us but it did not in the least concern us. We read of it, — what little there was to read, — much as we now read of the exploits of a rebel general in China. Napoleon had a very different idea as to the relation of his plans to ourselves, but we knew nothing of his ideas, and had we known them, they would probably have influenced us but little.

But England touched us where we were sensitive. She maintained the great fleet which saved her and the liberties of the world, only by the most strenuous effort. Her population was much less than now and

her supply of seamen scarcely sufficient. Discipline was harsh and the hardships of the service very great. Unfortunately patriotism was at low ebb, <sup>Desertion of English Seamen</sup> not only in England but the world over. It is said that in the war that followed our own country drafted four hundred thousand men, yet never succeeded in getting more than six thousand under arms at any one time. England met similar difficulties. Desertions of seamen were common. Obviously the most practicable thing for a deserter to do was to ship aboard an American vessel, where he stood a pretty good chance of passing himself off as an American. And since England had technically no right to search our ships, the chance of escape seemed good.

But England simply had to have her seamen. If for one moment the fleet failed in its great task, everything that England was and stood for would perish. Her moral claim to the surrender of these deserters was a pretty strong one, and if we enlisted them knowingly, we were assuredly at fault. So in defiance of precedent England boarded our ships and took her seamen where she found them. In case of doubt, she gave herself the benefit of the doubt. She certainly sometimes took American citizens, perhaps even in some cases took them knowingly.

This boarding of our ships and impressment of our seamen incensed us. We did not take <sup>America resents seizures</sup> account of England's desperate situation or of our interest in the battle she was waging. These were nothing to us. Nor do we seem to

have considered the question of our right to admit deserters to our service. The outrage angered us and we declared war. It is doubtful if any nation to-day would declare war under such circumstances unless looking for a pretext. There would be protests, diplomatic exchanges, mutual concessions and precautions, and finally reparation for any injuries inflicted. But we were young and had the limitations of youth.

In the war that followed there were a number of brilliant naval engagements in which our ships demonstrated, much to England's surprise, their superior sailing and fighting qualities.

**Indecisive naval victories** England had been too busy in these years of warfare to study the art of ship building and make improvements as we had been free to do. Hence we won some brilliant victories, of which we have perhaps been inclined to make too much account. But none of these victories gave us command of the sea or contributed appreciably to the winning of the war. Meanwhile on land our record was inglorious. The only battle which ended in victory for the American arms was the battle of New Orleans fought after peace had been signed, while the enemy ravaged our country and burned our capitol. The impression is prevalent in America that we were victorious in this war, an impression to which English apathy in the conduct of the war and the favorable terms of peace which we secured lend a certain color. But if the Allies in the present war should make peace with Germany after

occupying Berlin and burning the emperor's palace, we should hardly count it a German victory. It was under such circumstances that England made peace with us.

And now again we have to note a very remarkable treaty of peace. There could be no question that England had us in her power. It was freely surmised that she would now reëstablish her authority over us. A power like France or Germany would certainly have done so. But England had espoused the cause of liberty and independence and was about to carry it farther rather than to curtail it. So the treaty merely stipulated that each should surrender all territory, prisoners, and property taken from the other,—a very one-sided provision when we consider that America had taken virtually nothing. The only other positive article which it is important to recall is a pledge of coöperation in suppressing the African slave trade, a provision strangely irrelevant to the struggle in question, but profoundly significant of the deeper currents of the national life of each. The issue over which the war was begun was not mentioned. England did not wish the right of search save in the supreme emergency which had passed. She has never claimed it since. On the other hand we were in no position to ask her to renounce the privilege. It was an issue that had died.

This we may regard as the second great crisis of our national life in its relation to other powers. It was a crisis which we did not create but which we

Favorable  
terms of  
peace

precipitated and aggravated by our failure to recognize the significance of the European situation and We pass our second crisis our refusal to make the fullest use of diplomatic means of settlement. At the close of this crisis England was the most powerful nation in the world, her great enemy having seemingly been permanently disposed of. Despite our scant claim to her consideration, she was considerate, even magnanimous. Once more she had saved us to independence and to Anglo-Saxon liberty.

## V

## THE CRISIS OF THE BOUNDARIES, 1815-1848

FOR the next thirty years our country remained at peace save for Indian wars which were but minor incidents of our growth. Yet minor crises were not wanting, and with England among others.

In the treaty of independence an honest attempt had been made to establish a natural boundary between Maine and the adjacent British possessions, but the watersheds designated for that purpose were unknown and proved less definite than had been expected. The result was a disputed territory of over twelve thousand square miles. Maine claimed it all of course, and New Brunswick was equally enterprising. When persuasion failed to establish extreme claims (there seems to have been no hint of compromise), Maine decided to take military possession and voted men and money for the purpose. This preposterous move was promptly matched by New Brunswick. It was plainly a case for the soberer powers behind to call down these presumptuous youngsters of the frontier. But one of these powers did not see it that way. Our Congress approved the action of Maine and voted further men and supplies.

But England took a different course. It was proposed to submit the dispute to arbitration and the King of the Netherlands was chosen as referee. After painstaking investigation he rendered a decision which

The Maine  
boundary  
dispute

gave us about three fifths of the disputed territory and New Brunswick two fifths. This award was rejected by our minister to the Netherlands without even submitting it to his government, a procedure which would seemingly have called for a reprimand from Washington. On the contrary his action was approved, apparently for no other reason than that the award did not give us *all* that we claimed. Thus began our experience with arbitration. The matter remained for some time unsettled but was finally closed by a treaty negotiated by large-minded representatives of both sides. We got about the amount that the award had given us, but somewhat differently located. There was much dissatisfaction, for we had not yet learned the necessity of compromise, but Webster, our representative, consoled us by saying that we had gotten the good land and New Brunswick the mountains. The matter is so small a one that it is now well-nigh forgotten, but it gives us pause to think what might have happened, had England been unfriendly toward us.

A much larger question was that of Oregon, which made trouble for more than thirty years. Spain owned the western coast to the northern boundary of California. Russia owned Alaska. All the country between was known as Oregon. We claimed it all, and were determined to give England no access to the Pacific. England, though asserting that she might just as fairly claim it all as we did, never did so, but she greatly

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desired to have the Columbia River as the boundary, as that was the only means of inland communication. She urged her claim on the ground of its inherent reasonableness, while we based ours on discovery and exploration, in which, however, her claims pretty nearly matched ours. When agreement seemed impossible England suggested a ten years' truce until we could see how the country settled up. This was agreed to, and then another ten years following it, both parties meanwhile clinging tenaciously to their claims. England felt that she could not surrender all outlet to the Pacific or her right to navigate the great river. She was willing to grant us the same. But we claimed all the coast and the exclusive navigation of the river. It was impossible to make this extreme claim seem reasonable to the English people, and as we pushed our claim unsparingly, relations became for a time somewhat strained. An American presidential campaign was waged and a candidate elected on the slogan: "Fifty-four forty or fight," which meant that the candidate (Polk) pledged himself, if elected, to secure all of Oregon up to latitude fifty-four degrees and forty minutes (the Alaskan boundary) or go to war for it. It is true that when elected he did nothing of the kind, but England could hardly know that at the time, and this virtual threat of the American people to go to war to enforce what seemed to Englishmen to be a wholly unreasonable claim put their patience to a severe test.

In view of these facts their action was significant.

Instead of threatening us in return or sending a military force to occupy the disputed territory, they sent **Britain's special inquiry** an agent to ascertain how many settlers of each nation were located there and which government they preferred. He found that Americans greatly predominated on both sides of the Columbia River and that they preferred their own government. His report was published, and as the facts became known to the English people, their indignation at American high-handed procedure was so far allayed that the government was able to propose the present boundary, which was accepted. England thus lost the navigation of the Columbia, which she had deemed indispensable, but Canada was not deprived of her outlet to the Pacific.

**Britain opposes expansion** The English conviction that Americans were unreasonable in their claims was not without its unfortunate reactions. There was a marked disposition for a time to retaliate and to resist American expansion. When Texas was about to enter the Union, both England and France used their influence against it, offering to guarantee her independence against Mexico on condition that she should not enter the American union. As this was about the period of "fifty-four forty or fight," we may safely attribute England's action in part to resentment. But it must not be forgotten that Texas, after achieving her independence from Mexico, had adopted a constitution prohibiting slavery, and that the proposal now was to admit her to the Union as a

## THE CRISIS OF THE BOUNDARIES

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slave state, a proposal intensely repugnant to English sentiment as also to the best sentiment of our own people. It is questionable whether this brief attitude of opposition is to be chiefly attributed to resentment or to magnanimity.

A dispute regarding the proposed Nicaragua Canal at this time also felt the influence of the Oregon controversy, and again, in its final settlement, disclosed the persistent attitude of the English people. England was gradually acquiring control of territories in Central America which would give her control of such a canal when built. We did not wish the canal to be under her control, though at that time we had no thought of having it under our own. We began by objecting to the occupation of these territories. But this occupation rested on settlements and commercial relations, some of them of long standing, and England naturally stood her ground. Then we took up the canal project as such, and England agreed, in the famous Clayton-Bulwer treaty, that the canal should be built and controlled by the two nations in common, and accepted a limitation of her territorial possessions in the vicinity. These limitations were vaguely defined and led to disputes in which England was the less reasonable party. Ultimately she yielded a considerable part of the disputed claims. Taken as a whole, we must again characterize her attitude as conciliatory.

It is perhaps appropriate to anticipate here the sequel of this story which came half a century later.

Slowly the opinion developed in America that the canal should be our own. When it became clear that this was to be the permanent judgment of the American people, we asked England to release us from the pledge of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. This she promptly did, asking only that we carry out the other provisions of the treaty, to leave the canal unfortified and open to the use of all nations on equal terms. John Hay reported this agreement with much satisfaction, only to meet with rebuff. It was justly objected that if we were to build and control the canal, we must be free to fortify it. Again he turned to England and asked the further concession and again the request was granted without a moment's hesitation. But this was at a later day, when Oregon was a fading memory.

The attitude of England during this period of minor crises was neither altruistic nor timid. It was characterized throughout by that keen regard for British interests which has ever marked the action of that enterprising people. There has been no romantic knight-errantry in British policy. Nor will any one familiar with the facts construe her concessions as due to fear. Never before or since was her power so great relative to that of other nations. Never did she have so free a hand. It is beyond doubt that she could have forced a more favorable settlement of the Maine and Oregon boundary disputes had she chosen to do so. She did not choose. Possibly her wiser statesmen looked forward to a time when a

## THE CRISIS OF THE BOUNDARIES

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strong America might stand her in good stead, but the English people, whose clearly expressed will determined British policy, can hardly have been so far-seeing. It is to the simpler virtues of fairness and the deeply implanted spirit of liberty that we must attribute their dominant attitude. If the Oregon settlers were mostly American and preferred American government, it was repugnant to English principles and to English instincts to deny them the Anglo-Saxon privilege. In familiar parlance perhaps we may say, the Englishman is a true sportsman. He detests the unsportsmanlike thing, at least among his peers. That he does not feel quite the same toward other races is not strange. They are not his race nor usually the equals of his race. He goes by facts, not by theories.

## VI

### THE CRISIS OF THE CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865

OUR Civil War brought a crisis in our relations with England. Nothing in her relation to us has been so much resented and possibly nothing so misunderstood as her action at this time. If, as the foregoing narrative seems to warrant, the attitude of England at the outbreak of the war was one of moderate friendliness, the situation was not the less an embarrassing one. Both sides were American, and in so far both might claim English friendship. In their differences also each could appeal to English sympathy. The southern states were fighting for independence, a principle which had taken a very deep hold on English thought. The northern states were fighting, really if not avowedly, for human liberty and the abolition of slavery, a cause to which England was irrevocably committed. What the line-up would have been if England had been an unconcerned onlooker it is difficult to say.

But England was very much concerned. One of the most important of her industries was the manufacture of cotton, an industry in which whole cities and districts were almost exclusively engaged. But England herself raises no cotton, and at that time her whole supply came from the southern states. It was a part of our military policy to blockade the southern ports and prevent both export and import. This deprived the

*The English  
cotton  
famine*

English manufacturers of cotton and brought their industry to a standstill. Thousands of operatives were thrown out of employment and brought to the verge of starvation. Discontent was widespread and sentiment naturally inclined toward the South.

The situation was much aggravated by our action in boarding an English vessel and taking off two representatives which the South was sending <sup>We seize</sup> to England. This was precisely what we <sup>confederate</sup> had gone to war about in 1812. <sup>agents</sup> In a way it was much worse, for England had boarded our ships in search of deserters, while we had taken two men who had pretty nearly the character of diplomatic representatives, who enjoy immunity from seizure in all civilized nations. We were palpably in the wrong, as we soon realized, surrendering the two representatives with due apologies in response to England's peremptory demand. This averted the worst results, but it did not altogether remove the irritation which our action had caused.

No government worthy of the name will see its people hunger without trying to relieve their suffering. The British government scanned the situation closely and questioned our procedure <sup>Britain resists</sup> at every doubtful point, seeking if possible <sup>blockade</sup> to open our blockade. The laws governing blockade were far from definite, and disagreements were numerous. Much turned on the question of the status of the Confederacy as a nation and as a belligerent, a question which neutral nations were free to decide

at their discretion, little hampered by definite rules or fixed precedents. Naturally such decisions were likely to be much influenced by their interests, and England had the most obvious motives for deciding in favor of the Confederacy.

In this emergency we appealed to the English people. The eloquent Henry Ward Beecher was sent **We appeal to the English people** to England to present the cause of the Union. Landing at Liverpool, he proceeded at once to the disaffected districts of the cotton industry. His first audience was sullen and discourteous. But taking the disturbances good-humoredly, he soon provoked a laugh, and taking advantage of this momentary favor, he launched out into an eloquent appeal for the cause of human freedom. There was attention, then applause, and finally an ovation. He was passed on to the next town and the next, until his progress to London became almost a triumphal procession. Then came perhaps the most astonishing fact in the history of this or any other people. A petition was circulated in these same industrial cities whose livelihood had been cut off by our blockade, praying the British government not to take the part of a government based on human slavery. The prayer was heeded and the contemplated aid was not given. As a result the blockade was continued and the cause of the Union prevailed. Much has been said of the momentary defection of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues from the high cause of human liberty to which they professed allegiance, but little

is known of the deliberate choice of the English people at that time to suffer hunger and loss for our cause. Whatever the wisdom of their decision, there can be no doubt of its heroic disinterestedness. A petition is a very undramatic thing, and it easily escapes attention, but this one must be counted among the great forces that contributed to the preservation of the Union in a moment of extreme peril.

But while few have heard of this act of popular sympathy, all have heard of the *Alabama*, that famous sea-rider that for so long terrorized the high seas. To the popular mind the exploits of this modern buccaneer are the real index of British sympathies during the war. This ship, together with a number of others, was fitted out in a British shipyard to raid our commerce. She was built on private contract like any other ship, and neither the British government nor the English people knew anything about it. The American consul at Liverpool found out about it, and the British government was asked to prevent its sailing. This it consented to do, but the action involved formalities and delay, and the ship got away a few hours before the decisive action was attempted. Probably there were Americans at the time who thought the government connived at this escape, but no such charge was ever proved or even alleged. Certainly those who are familiar with the red tape of our own government will not find it difficult to account for the delay. After the war England willingly consented to refer the matter to ar-  
The Ala-  
bama dep-  
redations

bitration, and she paid promptly the damages which the commission assessed, though she regarded the award as excessive, as our later settlement with the individual losers seemed also to demonstrate. The only part which the British government and the English people had in this deplorable transaction was carelessness in permitting the abuse of their neutrality and promptness in paying the damages thus unwittingly incurred.

Britain was peculiarly unfortunate in this crisis in our national affairs. She was neither unfriendly to

**Britain's  
disadvan-  
tage** America nor yet to the Union cause. In the end she was strikingly favorable, and that under extreme difficulties. But her sympathy was necessarily expressed only by forbearance and in negative ways, while injuries inflicted by individual citizens without her warrant were of a nature to powerfully impress the imagination. The British government and people, at the moment of their greatest disinterestedness, suffered as never before in the opinion of Americans. It was long before the misunderstandings of this period were finally removed.

## VII

### THE CRISIS OF ARBITRATION, 1881-1899

THE period of peace between the Civil War and the War with Spain was not marked by any of those dramatic events which appeal to the imagination. It was none the less a period of real crises and one which at one time subjected the friendship between the two countries to a severe strain. The striking event of the period was a demand on the part of the United States, enforced by a virtual threat of war, that Britain should submit to arbitration her claim, not against ourselves, but against another country. It was the extraordinary nature of this demand rather than the character of the claim itself, which constituted the great issue of the period. This we may appropriately call the crisis of arbitration. There were other and earlier issues, however, in this period, at least one of which is worthy of notice.

By the purchase of Alaska we had acquired the chief breeding ground of the seals, the only other breeding ground being in Russian possession. Americans and Russians could therefore take the seals on land and under conditions which permitted of regulation and protection to the herds. But the Canadians, who had always been enterprising sealers, could take the seals only on the high seas, a method which threatened the existence of

The Bering  
Sea contro-  
versy

the herds. America and Russia were therefore interested in protecting the seals, but Britain, acting in these outside matters for Canada, was interested in maintaining this destructive freedom of the sealer. In this Britain and Canada were certainly on unenviable ground, sacrificing a valuable human interest to the interests of a local industry. But men whose all was invested in the sealing industry could not be expected to sacrifice it willingly. And whatever Britain herself might have thought of the issue, it was contrary to the principles of colonial liberty for which we had fought for her to coerce Canada. And though America and Russia protested against the destructive selfishness of taking the seals at sea, they did not seem inclined to share with the Canadians the privilege of taking seals on land, a privilege of which they enjoyed a monopoly.

Having failed to secure the necessary international agreement, our government resorted to the extraordinary measure of assuming jurisdiction over Bering Sea, and seized, condemned, and sold certain Canadian sealing vessels sixty miles from land. It had long been the rule of all civilized nations that nations exercised jurisdiction over the sea adjoining their coasts for a distance of three miles from the shore. The high seas beyond this limit are no-man's land or every man's land, and all are united to prevent their appropriation. Britain was therefore instant and sharp in her protest. She had quite as much warrant for war as we had in 1812

**We seize  
Canadian  
vessels**

if she had been inclined to use it. She chose instead to negotiate and finally to arbitrate.

In the negotiations which followed and in the later arbitration, we advanced the most novel and extraordinary claims, — first that Bering Sea was a *Mare Clausum* or closed sea, and therefore subject to national control. This claim, however, was soon dropped as being obviously indefensible. Other claims were advanced looking to the same end. It was even urged that the seals were semi-domestic animals and that we might therefore claim a sort of ownership of them, no matter where they might stray. These and other arguments were solemnly urged before the arbitration commission, but all were decided against us, and we were compelled to pay damages for the vessels we had seized. The controversy was aggravated, perhaps, by the reputed anti-British sentiment of Mr. Blaine, our Secretary of State.

From a diplomatic standpoint Britain appears in this transaction to great advantage. She was cool, firm, and eminently correct, maintaining <sup>The right and wrong of the case</sup> her clear right as defined by long-standing usage. In contrast, the American procedure was precipitate, hazardous, and innovating. Yet it is not to be forgotten that the net result of it all was the destruction of the seals and the sacrifice of human interests. It was a case where law and precedent were clearly inadequate for their purpose in this vague and remote part of the world. Britain, respecting Canadian liberty even in its narrow and

shortsighted exercise, stood by law and precedent. We attempted, from mixed motives and by ill-considered methods, to defend real interests. But whatever the merits of the case, it was peaceably settled despite its incidents of asperity and needless provocation.

There soon followed a controversy over the Venezuelan boundary, which assumed a much more serious character. Venezuela adjoins on the east the British colony of Guiana, and a dispute as to the boundary between them had long existed. Finally Venezuela arrested two British officers on the disputed territory and then appealed to the United States for protection against the inevitable British claim for reparation. This aid was finally granted. President Cleveland, taking his stand upon the Monroe Doctrine, virtually threatened war against Britain unless she consented to submit the matter in dispute to arbitration.

It is difficult for an American to understand how this demand impressed the British public. To begin with, the Monroe Doctrine was little known outside our own country, and its validity had never been admitted by any other nation. Great Britain had challenged it almost at the moment of its announcement. Bismarck had called it a piece of international impertinence. It had no precedent and rested solely upon our own fiat. This is quite enough for us, but it is hardly satisfactory to others.

**Venezuela  
boundary  
dispute**

**Britain re-  
sents our  
demands**

But even conceding the validity of the Monroe Doctrine, this seemed a most preposterous application of it. That doctrine was originally a warning to certain European powers engaged in a reactionary effort to restore the authority of antiquated governmental systems at home,— and incidentally, to restore the authority of Spain over her revolted colonies,— against extending their “system” to the Western Hemisphere. England was not one of these countries, and indeed it was at her suggestion that the step was taken. Gradually, however, the doctrine was broadened into the popular slogan, “America for the Americans,” and it became a general warning to European powers not to seek territorial acquisitions in the Western Hemisphere. Existing territorial possessions it did not undertake to disturb. Thus far it was intelligible and fairly justifiable as an assertion of national self-interest. Englishmen could understand why we did not wish such a power as Germany to get a foothold on our side. They could understand why we did not wish France to occupy Mexico as she tried to do during our Civil War, even though she already occupied islands in the Caribbean and her colony of Guiana. Her position in Mexico was much nearer and more dangerous to us.

But why England, whose possessions bordered ours for three thousand miles, should be restrained from punishing a border outrage on a disputed boundary with a semibarbarous nation thousands of miles away, was not clear. If the theory of the Monroe

Doctrine covered the case, its spirit did not, or if it did, then that spirit was one of meddlesomeness rather than of reasonable self-interest. So the Englishman reasoned.

To all this was added the immense disparity between the two civilizations. Britain incontestably stood in the front rank of civilized powers. Her administration of backward colonies was the best the world had known, incomparably better than any such people itself could supply. Venezuela was the veriest caricature of civilization and free government as we, above all nations, should know. If any stretching was to be done, the interests of civilization required that the British authority rather than the Monroe Doctrine should be stretched.

Finally, it did not help matters to the English mind that this seemingly unreasonable demand should have been made so peremptorily and under threat of war. It will be clear that President Cleveland's procedure subjected the friendliness of the British people to a pretty severe test.

On the American side two facts were discernible, though inextricably intermingled. The first was lingering resentment toward Great Britain, whom we unjustly held responsible as a nation for the *Alabama* injuries and the effort to break our blockade. The opinion was prevalent that Great Britain, or at least her governing classes, hated our democracy, feared our expansion, and desired the disruption of the Union. The nu-

**The interests of civilization**

**Aftermath of the Civil War**

merous occasions in which the British people had saved us from disaster, favored our independence, and encouraged our expansion, had all been of the inconspicuous and undramatic sort which appeal little to popular imagination. Not until the next crisis in our history was Britain's attitude toward us to become really apparent. This prevalent suspicion and dislike of Britain our President at that time is said to have shared.

But another and far worthier motive was present in the mind both of the President and of the people. It was the conviction that the relations <sup>American</sup> idealism between all nations should be regulated by reason rather than by force. It mattered not that England was a worthy nation and Venezuela an unworthy one. If England had a just case against her adversary as she claimed, a fair tribunal would establish her claim. This broad generalization is a typical example of sincere American idealism which is often heard among us to-day.

It is undeniable that Britain was less disposed to recognize such ideal methods than we believed ourselves to be. Perhaps it may be said that English experience with backward peoples, — and practicability even with developed peoples, — had made her skeptical as to the practicability of such methods. Experience generally has a tendency to qualify our faith in the practicability of ideals. Lord Salisbury at the time expressed the feeling of the British Government and of the British people that reasonable

as the principle of arbitration might seem, much experience would be required before it could become a practical and just procedure. For instance, in the present case, if arbitration were agreed upon, what kind of evidence would such a tribunal consider? Ancient treaties and agreements would of course be studied, but suppose these proved hopelessly ambiguous, as has so often happened! On what would they then base their decision? On governmental efficiency? On developed commercial or industrial interests? Would Venezuela agree to admit such considerations? Would Britain consent,—should Britain consent,—to have them altogether excluded? And considering the case more broadly, could any tribunal of arbitration venture to assess the merits of competing civilizations? Would not prejudice run riot in such a case? Would any people accept a verdict which seemed to brand them as inferiors? And yet have the merits of competing civilizations no right to be heard in such a case? Do we realize that if our quarrel with Spain had been submitted to arbitration, any tribunal that could have been formed would have left Cuba in the control of Spain, that arbitration would call a halt to all of that forcible revision of human affairs to which so much of our progress has been due?

Such considerations as these,—very real to the minds of those widely experienced in dealing with all kinds of peoples,—were far more present to the British mind than to our own. They saw in President Cleveland's ultimatum, therefore, not only

## THE CRISIS OF ARBITRATION

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meddlesomeness, — for by universal agreement the matter did not in the least menace our interests, — but an offensive peremptoriness, and finally a doctrinaire idealism which might easily result in a miscarriage of justice. The situation was a serious one.

None the less the British government acquiesced in our demand. This was not done at once, for feeling ran high in England against a demand which seemed both arrogant and unreasonable. Moreover much work remained to be done in the arrangement of preliminaries before there could be any hope of a satisfactory decision. Several years passed in this patient work of preliminaries and in the even more important work of influencing the feeling of the two peoples. The work was at last finished, and at about the moment when we peremptorily refused to arbitrate our quarrel with Spain, the Venezuelan boundary dispute was settled by arbitration. It must not be forgotten, however, that opinion in Britain has never wavered that our action in the matter was one of high-handed injustice. It was therefore with mutual heart burnings that we drew near the great crisis which at the end of the century was to modify profoundly both our national destiny and the relations of the two peoples.

Britain  
yields to  
demands

## VIII

### THE EUROPEAN CRISIS BEGINS, 1897-1898

THE Spanish-American War marks an epoch in the relation of the two countries. Not that it called for definite coöperation or involved any nominal change, but it afforded abundant occasion for the display of national feeling. It is not too much to say that the attitude of Britain at this time was a revelation to the American people. Entering the war with a vague consciousness of grievances dating from Civil War days, and with the memory of recent clashes and partial diplomatic defeats, our general attitude toward Britain was one of suspicion. We spoke of her as our traditional enemy and fancied that she was jealous of our prosperity and that she feared the reaction of our democracy upon her effete monarchical institutions. Prudence might restrain her from attacking us, but she was secretly hostile to our expansion and to the growth of our institutions. It had been for years the standing resource of our politicians to "twist the lion's tail," as this appeal to anti-British sentiment was called.

This anticipated attitude on the part of England was not realized, but it found its counter-hostility of part in the hostility of other nations whom we had not thought of as unfriendly. Popular sentiment in Germany, Austria, and especially in France, was astonishingly bitter. Americans

living in Germany were treated with a courtesy which prepared them not a little to understand the German attitude during the present war. In Paris, feeling ran so high that it provoked a temporary American boycott of French millinery and dress-making, which caused the utmost alarm in the trade. Austria, more remote, manifested her religious and dynastic sympathies for Spain in a not unnatural manner. The explanation of all this was precisely that which popular opinion had attributed to Great Britain, a jealousy of the great power whose growth had at last brought it into conflict with Europe with certain menace to the less vigorous life of the latter.

The surprise evoked by this unanticipated hostility emphasized by contrast the unexpected friendliness of Britain. Sympathy for our cause was instant and general. It was manifested by every organ of popular expression, popular <sup>Unexpected</sup> <sub>friendship of Britain</sub> demonstrations, the press, and private utterances of every sort. The attitude was best expressed by the blunt statement of the *London Spectator*, "We are not, and we do not pretend to be, an agreeable people, but when there is trouble in the family, we know where our hearts are."

The surprise of it all was not lessened by any apparent motive of self-interest on Britain's part. Spain was not an enemy that she dreaded, as was Russia when attacked by Japan. We were not in any way pulling her chestnuts out of the fire. Neither directly nor indirectly could she hope to profit by the humili-

tion and despoiling of Spain. It was purely a family sentiment. We had not felt it, had not known that she felt it. Perhaps she did not know that we did not feel it though our attitude during the Boer War and in the Venezuela controversy must have been rather a chilling revelation of American sentiment. Nor was this British sentiment studied. It is simply impossible to work up a general and popular demonstration of sympathy on short notice, especially in a country where the press is really free. If we were in any doubt as to the sincerity and spontaneity of this sympathy, Spain, at least, was not. No, nor France nor Germany. The latter in particular saw in it an ominous hint of an Anglo-Saxon solidarity which she strove thenceforth to prevent by every means in her power.

But there was more than popular sympathy. The **Favor of British government** rendered us the most signal services and in more than one **government** emergency saved us from disaster.

Lord Cromer, at that time British administrator in Egypt, has recently recounted his own part in one of these transactions. The American fleet had been sent to destroy the Spanish warships in Manila. Anticipating this, the more powerful Spanish fleet, which later sailed to Santiago, was dispatched from Spain to Manila via Suez to reënforce the Spanish fleet there. They could reach their destination only by coaling en route, and this was begun at the great British coaling station of Port Said. When Lord

Cromer heard of it, he peremptorily stopped the proceeding, even compelling them to take out part of the coal already shipped. International law on this point, as on most points, is rather vague. It is understood that a belligerent vessel may legitimately take enough coal in a neutral port to take it to the nearest home port. But the practice is such, as Lord Cromer says, that he could easily have "stretched" the principle sufficiently to allow them coal enough to reach Manila, the nearest home port *in the direction of their voyage*. He chose to stretch it in our favor, allowing them only enough to take them to Barcelona. As a result the Spanish fleet in Manila was not reënforced and our fleet won the victory. Suppose *our* fleet had been destroyed and the combined Spanish fleets had then sailed for America! Suppose a *German* administrator had been in control of Egypt! What would have been the result to America?

But a far greater danger confronted us at that time than the combined Spanish fleets. It will be remembered that our destruction of the Spanish fleet at Manila had unexpected consequences. When Dewey started, there was no thought of occupying the Philippines, either permanently or temporarily. But when the Spanish fleet had been destroyed, we found ourselves confronted by an unexpected situation. The Filipinos were in revolt against the Spanish government. That government depended upon the fleet for support, and the destruction of the fleet left it helpless. There was the gravest

Danger of  
clash with  
Germany

danger that the Spanish population would be massacred. It became necessary, therefore, to occupy the Islands in the interest of the Spaniards themselves, and Dewey stayed, at first on his own authority, and later with sanction and military reënforcements. This temporary occupation developed, quite unexpectedly, into annexation.

The American people had not the slightest anticipation of this development, but other nations were more

*Germany anticipates Spain's collapse* thoughtful. Germany, in particular, though not anticipating our annexation of the Islands, quite foresaw that our victory would leave them helpless and result in their loss to Spain. It was at the moment of her fullest enthusiasm for colonies. If Spain lost the Philippines and we did not take them, here was her chance.

Hence a German squadron more powerful than that of Admiral Dewey was dispatched to the Philippines to be prepared for whatever might happen. It arrived after the destruction of the Spanish fleet and found Manila Bay in occupation of the Americans, who had taken over the necessary task of policing the harbor, assigning anchorages to arriving ships, forbidding movement after dark lest there be collisions, etc. What happened is variously told, doubtless with much picturesque modification of detail, but with agreement as to essentials. Perhaps the brief account current in Manila will serve our purpose as well as any. It condenses into one brief incident what was

in reality a prolonged and harassing negotiation, but it faithfully portrays the true relation involved.

According to this account, the Germans on arrival were assigned an anchorage as usual. The German Admiral replied with much hauteur: "I am here by the order of his majesty the German Emperor," and he proceeded to anchor elsewhere than in the place indicated. The meaning of this was that he did not recognize the right of the Americans to exercise authority there, this doubtless in accordance with his instructions, for even the briefest and most tacit recognition of that authority might have had grave consequences in later diplomatic negotiations. Care must therefore be taken from the outset to acknowledge no other authority than that of the Kaiser.

This and other deliberate repudiations of American authority at last raised a definite issue. Admiral Dewey finally sent a peremptory note to the German Admiral, demanding that he keep the anchorage assigned and adding, — so the popular version goes, — that "if he wanted fight he could have it at the drop of the hat." The German Admiral now called on the commander of a British cruiser lying in Manila and asked him this question: "What would you do in the event of trouble between Admiral Dewey and myself?" To which the latter is said to have replied: "What I would do in that event is known only to Admiral Dewey and myself." The German Admiral returned to his flagship and made no further trouble.

The next morning the British cruiser was found anchored between the flagship of Admiral Dewey and that of the German Admiral. Shortly after, the German squadron weighed anchor and sailed away.

Whatever the details regarding this much disputed incident, the main facts are perfectly clear. The German squadron was there to take possession of the Philippines if possible, and with distinct instructions not to recognize American authority there. Nor can it be doubted that these instructions were further to the effect that while American opposition was to be ignored, even resisted if necessary, a clash with Britain was to be avoided. The reported answer and action of the British commander, — both undoubtedly in accord with the instructions of his government, — was significant of the relation which that government maintained toward us in that momentous crisis. "What I would do is known only to Admiral Dewey and myself." That is, "there is an understanding between the two peoples and they may be expected to act in concert in any serious emergency." And the position of that cruiser between the two flagships, insignificant though it might be in itself, was a symbol of the position which the mighty power of the British navy has steadfastly maintained, between ourselves and those that would do us harm. Once more let us imagine the case as it might have been. Without the certain intervention of Britain the least that could have happened would have been ignominious surrender to German demands, — the most, a conflict which would

have brought us crushing defeat with consequences which it must make us shudder to contemplate. We have been accustomed to think lightly of our war with Spain as one that at no time involved serious danger to ourselves. It was in fact a period of extreme crisis, in which destruction yawned before us, a destruction from which we were saved by the friendship of Britain. If we are inclined to discount this friendship, it is well to remember that Germany at least took it seriously, the action of the British commander having been made the subject of serious diplomatic protest on the part of the German government.

Again we need not assume that Britain's friendship was wholly disinterested. Such friendships are rare in the world, even between individuals, and between nations are hardly to be expected. No doubt British statesmen have been conscious for some time that with the growing tendency of her rivals to unite for purposes hostile to her interests, it was becoming increasingly difficult for her to protect those interests alone and the need of coöperation was becoming ever more urgent. What more natural than that she should look to her nearest kin for coöperation in defense of interests that were at once hers and theirs. But if statesmen reasoned thus, the people did not. They have been far from appreciating the dangers ahead of them and have been almost as unconscious as we have been of the designs of their enemies. Yet it was the British people even more than the British statesmen who gave us their sympathy at that time.

If they had been jealous and unfriendly, they would have shown it. There is no country in the world where people express their feelings more freely. They were not jealous but friendly, the only people in the world who were friendly to us at that time.

In estimating this attitude of the British people it is well to remember that this war marked an epoch in our **Our new colonial policy** national policy. Up to this time we had been a continental nation and had sought no colonies. When the war broke out, we did not possess a single square mile of territory outside of the American continent. When it ended, we possessed Hawaii (which otherwise would have become an important British station), Puerto Rico, Samoa, Guam, and the Philippines, while we had acquired naval stations in Cuba and rights of control that amounted to partial possession. In all of these we encroached upon areas where Britain was our natural rival. Had we not occupied Hawaii, Britain would have acquired it by the will of its people. We had long been rivals of Britain in Samoa. The Philippines are near Hong Kong, the headquarters of British power in the Far East, and are in that great island area which is unquestionably dominated by Britain. The Caribbean Sea is the gateway to Panama and was controlled by Jamaica and other British possessions there, while Britain held the right by treaty to share with us in the building and control of the Canal. Nations are generally very jealous of a power that thus pushes into their "sphere of influence," appropri-

ating desirable territories, bidding for coveted trade, and establishing uncomfortable neighbor relations. We can imagine what Germany would have felt if we had pushed into regions where her influence was paramount. We know what Britain feels when Germany tries to establish herself in Morocco over against Gibraltar or elsewhere in proximity to her interests. Britain has striven for years to avoid this unwelcome proximity, for the two peoples are not friendly and do not trust each other.

But from the first Britain has welcomed the American advance. She did not try to get the Philippines, but assisted us to get them. She withdrew from Samoa, leaving us thus a freer hand. She allowed us to take Hawaii, though her possession would have been the alternative soon or late. She encouraged our expulsion of Spain from the West Indies and has since favored every extension of our influence there, though both Germany and France have opposed it. Above all she voluntarily surrendered her rights in the Panama Canal without compensation on the sole condition that we should permit its use by all nations on equal terms.

Perhaps nothing is more significant of the relation of Britain to America than her attitude toward Germany in the period immediately preceding the World War. We have only slowly come to realize how far-reaching were Germany's designs. Not even yet do we realize how far they concerned America. We have heard, rather incredulously perhaps, of Germany's designs on

Relations preceding World War

South America, and have realized, although very feebly, that these designs might concern us. But Germany had plans for regions much nearer to us than South America and was much nearer than we realize to carrying them out.

It must be remembered that in her plans of expansion, which embraced the entire world, Germany figured largely on enlisting the coöperation of other nations until such time as she could do without them. In particular she counted on the aid of Britain, as her imperialist writers in recent years have plainly indicated. For this coöperation Britain was to receive very large rewards, though it is an open secret that Germany expected the British Empire soon to collapse, with the result that Germany would become virtually supreme. The concessions made to these temporary allies were therefore not to be permanent.

In San Domingo the United States had established an unofficial receivership for the payment of the bank-

The San  
Domingo  
receiver-  
ship

rupt nation's debts. This worked well until a revolution broke out which interrupted its operation and endangered the lives and property of foreigners. The United States,

mindful of the sensibilities of Latin America, was reluctant to intervene by force and did so only when a German cruiser approached, when order was restored and the interests of foreigners again protected.

Similar conditions existed in Hayti, and it was apparent that there too intervention would be necessary. When this became apparent early in 1914, a joint note

was received by our government from France and Germany to the effect that in the event that intervention should become necessary in the affairs of Hayti, the intervention of a single power would not be satisfactory to them. The Haytian problem

This meant, of course, that they demanded the right to intervene, either with or without our coöperation. This was precisely the thing that we wished to avoid, for intervention in the affairs of a thoroughly demoralized people may easily become permanent occupation, as the history of Egypt has shown. Above all things, we did not wish Germany in Hayti, for we knew she wished a foothold in the West Indies with a view to extending her power in our part of the world, and that she would be disposed to take advantage of any pretext to remain. It is difficult to say what the outcome of this challenge of the Monroe Doctrine might have been if the Great War had not followed almost immediately afterward, giving us a chance to bring Hayti under our protection and restore order to her distracted state.

But the important thing to note is this coöperation between Germany and France. There can be little doubt that it was Germany that made the proposal. She felt that we would be less jealous of two powers than of one, for it would look less like annexation. Moreover, the participation of France was plausible, for Hayti was once a French possession and it is the only Latin-American republic whose people speak French. Now Germany and France coöperate

that we have learned that Germany was even then contemplating the seizure of the French colonies, we can of course understand that she looked upon this arrangement with France merely as a temporary expedient. But the point for us to note is that even so friendly a country as France was induced to coöperate in a plan which she knew would be bitterly resented by our country. She was not particularly hostile to us,—though as we have seen she had been unsympathetic toward us during our war with Spain,—but she was willing to seek even a very slight and uncertain advantage at our expense.

German schemes for coöperation with Britain were much more extensive and involved much greater and **Germany** more permanent advantages to the latter. **approaches** A book published in 1911 in Germany by a **Britain** recognized German authority elaborated a plan for the virtual division of the whole world between these two powers, giving maps to show the spheres of each. Thus the map of South America gave the southern portion,—Chili, Argentina, and a part of Brazil to Germany, and the great tropical portion,—Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, etc.,—to Britain. Similar divisions were to be effected elsewhere, all very flattering to Britain.

It was in pursuance of this policy that a German of distinguished title, in the month of June, 1914, sought an audience with the highest authority of the British government. He guided the conversation as soon as possible to the affairs of Mexico, then in a

most hopeless condition, and added: "Do you not think it would be a good thing if your government and ours should jointly intervene in Mexico? There would be no difficulty in agreeing upon our different spheres of influence." The proposal was peremptorily rejected and the distinguished visitor virtually shown the door.

Let us be careful to note what this proposal meant. A "sphere of influence" is but a euphemism for a colony in the early stages of occupation and consolidation. Such a move would therefore have given Germany a colony adjoining the United States, where she would have been free to establish her military power and to develop that much-dreaded institution, a military and naval base. A base of operations on our frontier is the Greek horse inside our walls. So long as Germany has no possessions in the Western Hemisphere, she is greatly handicapped in any aggressive policy which she may be tempted to adopt there. She would have to begin by seizing some point and creating a base and accumulating supplies, all against the opposition of an enemy whose own supplies were near at hand. This could be accomplished only by an overwhelming initial superiority. But with her base ready in advance and her munitions accumulated there, her task would be comparatively easy.

It therefore becomes the corner stone of our policy not to allow Germany or any power that we fear to establish a base of operations near us, either by acquiring a colony or by "intervening to restore order,"

or by an alliance with some of our lesser neighbors. A German base in Mexico would be the worst possible situation for us, because it would not only expose us to attack by land, but by furnishing the necessary base for the German navy, it would furnish the necessary facilities for attacking the Panama Canal, our most vital and most vulnerable possession. All this, of course, the British government perfectly understood when the distinguished visitor made his tempting proposition.

But it is to be noted that Britain had no such interest at stake as we had. A German base in the Caribbean would endanger Jamaica and a few other minor possessions, but Britain realized perfectly that if she were ever at war with Germany, the war would be fought in Europe. A hostile base in the West Indies, therefore, while it might be fatal to us, could injure her very little.

On the other hand, let us note the advantage which Britain would have gained by such a scheme. First of all, it would have given her valuable territory in Mexico. No doubt Britain cares little for further additions of territory as such. Her hands are already very full. But Mexico contains some of the most valuable oil fields in the world, and their product, largely controlled by British capital, is a chief dependence of the British navy which now burns oil instead of coal. The German proposal plainly indicated that this British interest would be respected in the division. Since the

## THE EUROPEAN CRISIS BEGINS

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struggle in Mexico has largely turned on the possession of these oil fields and attempts have been made repeatedly to withhold the oil from Britain, the temptation to assure that supply by occupation was a very great one.

But an infinitely greater temptation was involved in this proposal. Germany, as Britain very well knew, was determined to expand. There were various plans, any of which would have satisfied her for the time being at least, — through Belgium to the Channel, through the Balkans and Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf, or in the Western Hemisphere. The first two were wholly inadmissible from the standpoint of British interests. The last was infinitely less dangerous to her and might easily have seemed advantageous. If Britain had consented to this last scheme, Germany would have renounced the others. It is stated on credible authority that Germany has repeatedly intimated to the British government her willingness to meet the latter's demands in the Old World if given a free hand in the New. Britain refused to give this, and the present war is the price she pays for her refusal.

Again it must not be imagined that Britain had any other motive in all this than wise self-interest. It was to protect herself that she protected us. But how is it that it was for her interest to strengthen us and against her interest to strengthen Germany? In population, in territory, in wealth we far surpass the German Empire.

Germany's  
plans for  
expansion

Our  
strength  
Britain's  
gain

If she regarded us in the same way, it would seem to be to her interest to check our growth by developing a rival in our vicinity. Evidently she does not regard us in the same way. Concessions granted to Germany would strengthen her without assuring her friendship. With America she feels that that friendship is assured. The English people simply cannot feel, — have never felt, — that we are a separate people. We are a separate nation, no doubt, but so are Canada and Australia. But the distinction is simply one of geographical convenience. We have the same language, the same kind of government, the same notions of life and all its higher interests. We are and have always been to England a part of her own people. There has been plenty of bickering in the family, as there is in families generally, but never a serious risk that the family could be divided against itself when threatened by a great danger from without. These bickerings and heartburnings have especially characterized periods of peace. From the War of 1812 to our Civil War was such a period with the sense of grievance predominantly on the side of Britain. From our Civil War to the War with Spain was again a period of relative coldness and misunderstanding with the sense of alienation rather on our own side. But no estrangement prevented Britain from supporting us against Germany in 1898 as she had done a century earlier against France. And again in the present war, the greatest convulsion that the world has ever known, the struggle was precipitated by a peremptory refusal on Britain's part to sacrifice

our interests, even for the greatest of advantages, and is continued by the coöperation of our arms in that far-away Europe that we fancied we had left forever.

The history of the two countries is thus a history of surface differences and underlying unity. When free from danger, we have differed, quarreled, even fought, but a serious crisis has always found us united. On the whole, Britain has been more conscious of the underlying unity than we have been. This is not strange. Britain is a world power; we are an American power. Her great family of free dominions, Canada, Australia, and the rest, have familiarized her with the idea of a scattered and yet united people. She has also had much more to do with such powers as Germany, Austria, and Russia, and knows how different is the underlying feeling of such alien peoples. We, lacking these experiences, have lived our lives much more unconsciously, enjoying our sense of security without attempting to explain it.

Differences  
conceal  
real unity

Yet our very unconsciousness is testimony to the fact. Why have we never worried about our Canadian frontier, never fortified or cared to fortify it? There is not another frontier in the world that is left unguarded like that. *The un-guarded frontier*  
Why have we never tried or seemingly cared to annex Canada? She adjoins our territory, shares our interests, and has the only population in the Western Hemisphere which could be easily assimilated to our own. Britain has said that she is free to unite with

us if she chooses. Yet while the project has been freely discussed, even urged, and that by Canadians themselves, we have never shown the slightest inclination to unite, though we have pushed our other frontiers out much more hazardously. The true reason is that we feel no real sense of division between us. The arbitrary boundary between us does not separate us.

Even more significant is our perfect indifference to the power which the British Empire has over us. We have been most careful that Germany should get no base in the Caribbean, that Cuba and our other Latin-American neighbors should enter into no relations with foreign powers. We have bought the Danish Islands and are looking anxiously at other foreign possessions lest by sale or conquest they fall into the possession of some doubtful power. But it does not worry us in the least that from a score of posts in the West Indies Britain could strike our canal, that from Canada she could invade our states, that from Fiji she could seize Samoa, and from Hong Kong the Philippines are at her mercy. In a war with her our navy would disappear from the seas as promptly as did that of Germany, and no Heligoland prevents a descent on our long coasts. But we refuse to be worried. All such considerations seem fantastic. And they are fantastic. There will be no war. We know it. We may think about our differences, but we build our whole national policy upon the unconscious recognition of our unity.

When a few years since we were urged to conclude treaties of arbitration with foreign powers, an American

## THE EUROPEAN CRISIS BEGINS

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statesman, noted for his keen insight into realities, expressed himself somewhat as follows: "I am in favor of such a treaty with Great Britain because I believe we would keep our promise. I cannot conceive of any difference arising between the two countries which our people would be afraid or unwilling to submit to arbitration. Such a treaty would therefore be sincere. But as between this country and certain other countries, I think that issues might arise and probably will arise which the American people would refuse to arbitrate. If Germany were to seize territory near our shores on whatsoever pretext, and should propose to submit the matter to arbitration, we would not arbitrate but would fight. We would not take any chance of having such an issue decided against us. It would therefore be wrong and hypocritical for us to promise to arbitrate such an issue with such a power, when we know in advance that we are likely to refuse to do so when the time comes." This may not have been a conclusive argument against arbitration treaties with such powers, but we can hardly doubt that the distinction that he draws between Britain and other powers is a correct one. We do not fear serious trouble with Britain. We do not feel the same confidence as regards any other great power.

Possibility  
of arbitration

## IX

### SUPER-EMPIRE

WHAT is the character of this power with which we are thus closely related? It is called an empire, but **The Super-Empire** this is true only in a partial sense. Empire implies authority exercised by some person or people over others who do not share this authority or help to determine who shall exercise it. Rome was an empire, even before she called herself by that name, for the Roman people bore rule over other peoples who did not have a voice in determining the character of that rule. Britain exercises such an authority over Nigeria, Guiana, and other colonies whose people seem unable either wisely to order their own affairs or intelligently to assist in doing so. In a less degree she exercises such an authority over India and Egypt. In so far Britain is an empire precisely as we are in so far as we exercise authority over the Philippines, Samoa, Puerto Rico, Hayti, and the like. But in all these cases that authority is lessening, both in the British Empire and in our own, and these dependencies, as we may truly call them, are gradually learning the art of self-management and becoming independent.

It is to the great self-governing dominions that we turn for that which is truly characteristic of Britain. There are five of these: Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. It has

already been explained that these dominions are free and independent. They make their own laws, establish their own tariffs, make their own treaties, choose their own officers, and even decide questions of peace and war for themselves, entirely without interference from the mother country. In all that regards these dominions, therefore, Britain is not an empire, but a group of nations.

If we ask what holds these nations together it is at first rather difficult to answer. We are accustomed in such cases to look for some kind of authority, some compulsion. History records no other example of a group of nations permanently united without some sort of authority constraining them. But there is no such authority, no compulsion, none at all. There never was such a group before, so far as we know. No wonder that German philosophers, studying this strange group, concluded that it really was not united at all; that if it jostled against some crisis, the group would break to pieces and each member would go after its own interest just as other independent nations do. But the great crisis of the World War has not separated it. All the members of the group have taken their place in the line just as though they were obeying the command of an emperor of recognized authority. Yet they all decided the question quite for themselves just as we did. Is not this the very thing that thoughtful men are trying to bring about in the world, a union among the peoples in which all shall coöperate

*The self-governing dominions*

*Union without coercion*

fully in matters of common concern, and yet do so freely without constraint?

This group is not a fixed group. Indeed there is nothing fixed about it except the fact of the group itself. It is not confined to a single race or speech. It has no constitution and by-laws, no fixed initiation or rules of procedure. It is like a group of friends. There are no terms of admission except the ability to play the part, to be friendly and to command the confidence of the group. The last addition to the group is a very wonderful one, South Africa, only a few years ago at war with the group, bitter against it, and speaking an alien tongue. Yet Britain had no sooner conquered South Africa, destroying all chance of that dreaded alliance with Germany which was the real cause of the war, than she gave South Africa back to herself, allowing her all the liberties for which she had fought, and inviting her into the group on even terms. Probably no one knew at that time how soon the group was to be put to the great test, but when the test came South Africa was ready. In a two-hour speech her prime minister, a Dutchman who had led her troops against Britain, made it plain to his countrymen that every consideration of safety and interest and honor required them to be loyal to the new fellowship, and to-day another Dutchman from South Africa and another former enemy is one of the little group of six men who guide the supreme affairs of Britain.

Slowly but surely other peoples are approaching mem-

bership in this fellowship. India and Egypt are qualifying for full participation, slowly, to be sure, yet so rapidly that those who know their peoples cannot avoid occasional misgivings. Possibly others who now depend on British protection will graduate into independence and participation in the shaping of British policy.

But the protégés of Britain are not the only ones that may strengthen her fellowship. France is no part of the British empire and never has ~~France and~~ been. A suggestion that she enter that ~~Britain~~ empire in any such formal sense as is true of India or Canada would be resented by every Frenchman. Yet it seems likely that the alliance now existing between the two countries is destined to be permanent. In no part of the world do their interests now clash or seem likely to do so henceforth. On the other hand, it is difficult to look forward to a time when certain great dangers will not confront them both. Present companionship in arms and prospective long companionship rebuilding the defenses of a shattered world will go far to insure the permanent coöperation of these two peoples, so long hostile and now so necessary as friends. And permanent coöperation and comity based on willing recognition of common interest is all there is to membership in this group, all there is to the free union of the British Empire. As the group grows it will no longer call itself by the misnomer of British Empire, nor will further accessions to the group call themselves British. The essence of the group does not lie in its name but in its union and its freedom.

# X

## AMERICA.

WHAT is the relation of America to this group of nations that are thus bound fast in unpledged friendship? The answer is that we are a friend, a friend of them one and all. The friendship is of long standing, a development from an earlier dependence, and a deep-seated instinct of protection. It has had its ups and downs, it is not ideal; but on the whole it has stood the test. It may be objected that under normal conditions we are a friend of all nations, but it is clear that the word so used means something much less. So we may say that the right-minded man is the friend of all men, but we mean something different when we speak of some one as one of his friends. As compared with our friendship for these peoples who are of our family, who speak our language and share our ways of thought and life, our profession of friendship for all peoples is but an empty phrase, a mere negative disclaimer of ill will. We are not merely friendly toward this group. We are their friend, and they are ours.

This friendship is a very substantial fact. No doubt exists in the mind of any reasonable man that it is an adequate guarantee of peace between us. If it were not, we should not feel as we do about the Canadian boundary and the British bases near the

vital points of our defense. But no man worries about these. We are sure the friendship will hold. We do not feel equally sure about any other friendship. We are on friendly terms with Japan and Spain, but we are by no means certain that we shall always be so. These friendships are not based on positive attachment, on intimacy of thought and purpose. They are merely relations of present amenity. The sentinels that guard the frontier salute each other as they pass.

We are friends, but we are no more than friends. We belong only to ourselves. We are not even allies, for we have not pledged ourselves to any <sup>America</sup> community of action, not even in the Great <sup>always independent</sup> War. We have kept ourselves free from "entangling alliances," as we were wisely advised to do from the first. Between us there exists only the single written pledge to submit our differences to arbitration,—a treaty which needlessly binds us to follow a well-established habit. No, we are nothing more than friends.

But now that we recall it, that is all there is to this group. They are friends, uncoerced and unpledged. No written agreements are the basis of this friendship or are necessary to strengthen it. Canada, in anticipation of this war, is asked to pledge her aid to Britain, but refuses to do so. She will not promise, though she helps freely and even coerces her citizens to do so. Australia will not promise, will not even coerce her citizens, but country and citizens alike

help to the limit of their power. They are friends and recognize the compulsion of friendship, but will recognize no other compulsion.

And since we are friends of a group whose only bond is friendship, it follows that in a sense we are a member of the group, — a member in a very real sense, too, for the reason for the group's existence is its friendship and peace, and we have that friendship and peace in assured permanency.

Yet there is an obvious difference. They are British and we are not and never shall be. That ~~United but~~ was settled long ago, and no one, American ~~not British~~ or British, would change it now. What does it mean to be British? It does not mean blood, for if it did, we would be as British as Canada or Australia, and far more so than India or Egypt. What makes Anglo-Saxon Canada British while Anglo-Saxon America is not? It is the flag, the governor general, the king's head on the postage stamp. These are signs of political allegiance. When the king commands, the subject must obey. Where the flag leads, he must follow. The obligation suggests authority and seems to rest on coercion. In all this we have no part.

But these things are deceptive. Their traditional meaning has wholly faded away. The king does not command nor does any one command in his name. If he did, they would not obey. The flag does not lead save where they carry it. These symbols, therefore, are memories, not present facts. And it is these things that are British, that make those who own them

British. These things we have discarded beyond recall. We have no king on our stamps and no governor to represent his nominal authority. We follow another flag. We are not British but American.

But though this difference represents no important living fact, it is a real difference. These symbols stand no longer for authority, for the power to command, but they are still an outward sign of union which appeals powerfully to all who call them theirs. Canada is as free to go her own way as we are, but she is much less likely to do so. The flag is familiar and the sovereign's countenance, and where these are found the Canadian is at home. No longer the symbols of authority, they have become very potent vehicles of sympathy. It still means much to be British. Ruled as we all are by catchwords and signs, these symbols are a powerful bond of union among this group of friends, a bond which we do not share.

*The  
changed  
meaning of  
symbols*

But while this makes the friendship less easy for us, less intimate, it does not make it less vital. The crises of the future, even more than those of the past, require coöperation on the part of those who have ideals and interests to guard. Such coöperation is assured on the part of those whom we must face. It is necessary on the part of those who would face them. Whatever the possibilities of a universal league among the nations, it must be apparent at a glance that the universal friendliness upon which such a league must rest is a far less substantial thing than the

## AMERICA AND BRITAIN

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bond that unites a group of friends. If such a league ever becomes possible, it will be because it is built about a substantial nucleus of tried and assured friends. Within this group, if not in the center of its closest intimacy, we stand, less holden by outward symbols, but not less dependent or depended upon. This is our relation to the greatest spontaneous union of free peoples that the world has thus far known.

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